

*Our calling is to reach all people
with the life-changing power of
God's Love and Grace available to
all through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

The Westby United Methodist Church
welcomes **everyone** with open arms and open
hearts as indicated in Romans 15:7 (NIV):

*Accept one another, then, just as Christ
accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.*



Westby United
Methodist Church
April 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

Justification by Faith

by Pastor Paul Lee

The plain condition whereof being once fulfilled, 'there is no more condemnation for us', but we are 'justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ'.

Justification by Faith – John Wesley

Early Methodists had their doctrine to help Methodist members become perfect Christians who love God and love their neighbors. Early Methodists' doctrine was the way to Heaven. And there were a few steps in this way to Heaven. Repentance – Justification – New Birth – Sanctification – Perfection. Among those steps of doctrine, there were two main pillars. They were Justification and Sanctification. These doctrines of Justification and Sanctification were not new ideas that Wesley found in the Bible. Before John Wesley, the ideas of Justification and Sanctification were used by Christian theologians and the church. However, John Wesley organized the relationship between Justification and Sanctification well, and Wesley's greatest achievement was applying these two concepts to churches and ministry. John Wesley and early Methodists devoted their lives to being perfect Christians according to the Methodist doctrine. And it truly happened that they experienced Justification and Sanctification in their lives.

Then, what is Justification? In his sermon, Justification by Faith, Wesley said, "The plain scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins. It is that act of God the Father whereby, for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of his Son, he 'showeth forth his righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of the sins that are past'."

For easier understanding, we can simply say, Justification is that "God justifies someone as righteous." Justification is God saying, "You are righteous." Then, how can we be justified as righteous? We can be justified through the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness of sins is the act of God that is shown to us through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Then, what is the condition to be justified? Wesley said, "I cannot describe the nature of this faith better than in the words of our own Church: 'The only instrument of salvation' (whereof justification is one branch) 'is faith: that is a sure trust and confidence that God both hath and will forgive our sins, that he hath accepted us again into his

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favour, for the merits of Christ's death and Passion." The only thing that we need is faith to be justified by God. It is not our moral good work, kindness, or good attitude. The only thing is the faith that we believe God forgives us and will forgive us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Justification by Faith is the first pillar of the doctrine of the early Methodist people. They believed that they could not save themselves by their works, but they believed Jesus is the only way to enter the life of God's presence. This is what we should learn in the present day as Methodists.

Pastor Paul

Pastor Paul's Schedule:

Westby UMC Office Hours:

- Thursdays (9:00-12:00)
- Anytime by appointment

Contact Information:

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April Birthdays

April 17 – Roger Zogg



Sunday School News

SAVE THE DATE: The kids will be presenting their message during the church service on **Sunday, April 6th** – a week earlier than usual to accommodate schedules. We are busy preparing our skit and special music to share with our church family.

We will not have Sunday school on April 13 or Easter Sunday April 20. Classes resume April 27. Check out the newsletter for the special events planned for Holy Week.



Thursday Morning Prayer Group

Prayer is a gift from God and a powerful tool that He gave to us. He wants us to use it, individually and as a group. Please continue to exercise your prayer muscles by joining us at 9:00 AM on Thursday, April 3rd for our monthly prayer group time. Thank you for your continued prayers for our church ministries, church members and our community.

Mission of the Month – Amara Rose Foundation

The mission for April is the Amara Rose foundation. The foundation was started by a local family to honor Amara who died of fentanyl poisoning in 2022, but it was also started in honor of all of those whose lives have been lost to addiction, fentanyl poisoning and mental illness, a leading cause of death for young people in our country. The aim of the foundation is to fight what's happening, and to stop it where and when they can. It provides presentations to raise awareness and help educate about the dangers of fentanyl and other drugs, and what can be done to stop them. The foundation provides resources to support recovering addicts and families who are dealing with loved ones struggling with addiction or the loss of a family member to drug abuse. You can make checks out to the church with Amara Rose on the memo line or you can send donations directly to the foundation at <https://amararosefoundation.org> or by mail to Amara Rose Foundation. PO Box 101 Westby, WI 54667.



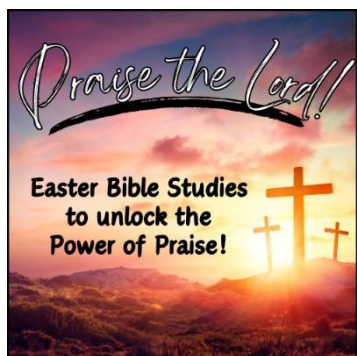


Thursday Morning Bible Study Group

Please join us on April 24th at 9:00 AM for our monthly Bible Study group. We will continue with our study of the books of Luke and Acts. We are learning and using the inductive Bible study method. The inductive Bible study is a method to read the Bible, find God's message from the Bible, and apply it to our lives. It is a method of reading the Bible first from the Bible, not from our life situations. To prepare for this month's study, please continue to read the book of Luke and Acts.

Growing in Faith Study Group

During April, we will postpone our book discussion so we can attend the ecumenical Wednesday evening Lent services at area churches.



April Online Studies – Lent, Easter and Praise

For our April online studies, we start the month off by finishing On Purpose: A Lent Devotional Journey, which will end on Sunday, April 13, Palm Sunday. During Holy Week, we'll dive into answering some questions related to the events leading up to Easter. The 7 Whys of Easter study will help to answer questions like, Why did Jesus die on a cross? Why did he rise from the dead? Why does it all matter? Understanding the answers to these questions can help us increase our love for Jesus and praise Him even more.

After Easter, we'll continue with the desire to praise our Lord by reading The Mysteries of Praise. Did you know that praise can be used as a weapon? This study will help us learn how to wield this spiritual weapon in challenging times and joyful times.

Here's the schedule for the April online studies. Please click on the links below to join us.

- On Purpose: A Lent Devotional Journey – ends April 13
 - <https://bible.com/p/72275107/049d2b890ca2bb50d05de9f51ee49bb9>
- The 7 Whys of Easter – begins on April 14
 - <https://bible.com/p/73110182/4e37924c0ed0f242b2323f29a94929fd>
- The Mysteries of Praise – begins on April 21
 - <https://bible.com/p/73206664/804b01d83a86fb7e312cbe5c91a65716>

These online studies and more can be accessed through the Bible App on your mobile device or the bible.com website, which are free resources. In addition to wonderful devotional and reading plans, they provide a verse of the day, and you will be able to read the Bible in a wide variety of versions.

Food Drive for Lent

This month, we will continue with the "Food Drive for Lent". The last Sunday to donate food will be Sunday, April 13, Palm Sunday. Our food donations will help support the Cashton Cupboard & Closet Food Pantry and Bethel Butikk this year.

Here are the food groups we'd like you to bring on Sunday mornings in April:

- Sunday, April 6 – Fruits: canned fruits, dried fruits, fruit cups, fruit juice
- Sunday, April 13 – Vegetables: canned vegetables, spaghetti sauce, tomato sauce



Let's continue to spread some generosity and work to help others by having overflowing piles of food.

Lent Bible Reading Schedule

We will continue and finish the Bible reading schedule that Pastor Paul developed to help us read through all four of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) during Lent. These readings will correspond to the devotionals in the Lent Devotional Booklet that was written by members of Viroqua UMC and Westby UMC.

4/1	Luke	9-10
4/2	Luke	11
4/3	Luke	12-13
4/4	Luke	14-16
4/5	Luke	17-19
4/6	No Reading	
4/7	Luke	20-21
4/8	Luke	22-23
4/9	Luke	24
4/10	John	1-3
4/11	John	4-5
4/12	John	6-7
4/13	No Reading	
4/14	John	8-9
4/15	John	10-11
4/16	John	12-13
4/17	John	14-16
4/18	John	17-18
4/19	John	19-21



Special Services in April

- **Wednesday, April 2** – The area Ecumenical Lenten Service and Soup Supper will be held at our church. The soup supper will begin at 5:00 PM and the service begins at 6:00 PM.
- **Sunday, April 6** – The Sunday school students will be presenting during the worship service.
- **Wednesday, April 9** – The area Ecumenical Lenten Service (6:00 PM) and Soup Supper (5:00 PM) will be held at Bethel Lutheran Church (S3533 County Rd B, which is just off County Rd Y).



- **Sunday, April 13** – Palm Sunday service.



- **Thursday, April 17** – Joint Maundy Thursday Service with Viroqua UMC. This service will be held at Westby UMC at 6:00 PM. Communion will be served during this service.



- **Friday, April 18** – A Good Friday Service will be held at Viroqua UMC at 1:00 PM.



- **Sunday, April 20** – Easter Sunday! Communion will be served during this service.

Then the angel spoke to the women. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying. ~ Matthew 28:5-6

Westby United Methodist Church – Board Meeting ✠ - March 16, 2025

Present: Pastor Paul, Jean Shore, Verna Drake, Tim Gaskell, Jane Gaskell, Sunwoo Lee, Ardith Hoff, Adrian Hoff, Jill Bjornstad, Kelly Bjornstad, Lois Gerling, Julie Fargen and Linda Weilnau

Opening: Tim Gaskell opened with prayer.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the February board meeting were emailed to the board and published in the March newsletter, so they could be reviewed prior to the meeting. Ardith Hoff and Jean Shore motioned to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Verna Drake provided the financial reports for February. These reports were emailed to the board members prior to the meeting. Verna reported that we recently received the pastoral costs from Viroqua UMC, so the February and Year-to-Date reports will be adjusted to reflect these costs. There was an increase in pastoral compensation. Lois Gerling said the Financial Audit is almost finished. Jean Shore and Ardith Hoff motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- ✠ West Entrance Modification – Verna Drake has contacted Janzen's several times and was told they will try to come this week to review what we want done and create an estimate for the project.
- ✠ Insurance Update – On March 1, our insurance was switched to Travelers 3M insurance, through the Conference. Our deductible is now \$25,000. Verna Drake is going to contact the insurance company because our insurance has increased \$200 per month, so she's going to ask why it has increased.
- ✠ Burgers in the Park Update – Bethel Butikk Foundation will be doing Burgers in the Park, on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Thursdays of the month in June, July and August. This year, they are only charging \$5 per meal to cover the cost of the food to get this event established again, so it will not be a fund raiser. Verna Drake found out that we can have a bake sale and/or other activities during the Burgers in the Park. Verna signed up our church to have a bake sale and provide music on July 17th. Verna also found a musician friend to perform that evening.
- ✠ AED (Automated External Defibrillator) – Everything for the AED is setup in the cabinet in the narthex. It needs to be mounted on the south wall by the back tables. We may need to have some training sessions.

New Business:

- ✠ April 2 Ecumenical Lenten Service & Soup Supper – Since one of the Viroqua churches isn't able to participate in the Viroqua Area Ecumenical Lenten Services, Pastor Paul asked if our church would be able to take their place. The committee agreed to have our church participate. In addition to hosting the service, which starts at 6:00 PM, each church is to provide a soup supper, starting at 5:00 PM. It was decided to offer 3 types of soup, a variety of crackers, shredded cheese for a soup topping, bars, milk, water and coffee. Linda Weilnau will create a sign-up sheet for providing food and will also send out an email to ask for assistance.
- ✠ Cemetery Clean-Up – We need to clean up the cemetery before they can start mowing. This involves picking up sticks and other items that have blown into the cemetery. We will schedule a time to do this at the April board meeting.

- ✚ Bethel Buttikk Recognition Dinner – The Bethel Butikk would like to hold their Volunteer Recognition Dinner at our church. It was decided to allow them to use the building. Verna Drake will provide them with the Building Use form for them to fill out. There will be 60-80 people at this event. It will probably be held the last part of April and they'll be using the building from around 4:00-5:30 PM.
- ✚ Yard & Flower Bed Maintenance – There is a lot of the edging coming up, out of the ground. We need to have this put back in place. Verna Drake will contact the Sam Spade business to inquire about the cost for this project.

Business from Board Committees:

- ✚ **Trustees** – Narthex Painting – Verna Drake will work on this. It was approved to allow Verna to purchase the paint for this project, about 2 gallons. A similar color of paint, as the current narthex color, will be used. It was suggested to look into installing a railing on the south side after the new approach to the west entrance is finished.
- ✚ **SPRC** – Julie Fargen and Verna Drake met with Pastor Paul in February to discuss how things are going. Pastor Paul indicated that he feels comfortable with the transition. One of Pastor Paul's goals is to have our church to be a place for young parents. He would like to have an area created in the back area of the church for children. It will be helpful for special services or activities that we share our expectations with him prior to the service or event.
 - The Westby and Viroqua SPRC committees met to discuss percentage amounts for pastoral costs between our churches for 2026. There is a formula for doing this and by using the formula, we will pay 23% of the pastoral costs. We are currently paying 34.5%. It was indicated that the minimum pastor wages will increase in 2026.
- ✚ **Worship** – Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter
 - Palm Sunday – We will have a regular service on this Sunday.
 - Maundy Thursday – This will be a joint service with Viroqua UMC and will be held at Westby UMC at 6 PM. Communion will be served during this service.
 - Good Friday – Viroqua UMC will have a service at 1:00 PM.
 - Easter – Our Easter service will be at 9 AM and communion will be served.
- ✚ **Education** – The Sunday school students will have a program during worship on Sunday, April 6. It was originally planned to have the student participate in the worship service on April 13, but this was changed due to scheduling conflicts. There will not be any Sunday school on April 13 or April 20.
- ✚ **Lay Leadership** – Ardith Hoff reported that she has started to write more articles for the website.
- ✚ **Missions** – The mission of the month for April is to be determined.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Paul attend ICD classes on March 11 & 12. During these classes, he got some ideas for our visioning discussion/planning event. He would like to have this event sometime in May and it may possibly be a 2-day event.

Jean Shore motioned to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned.
Minutes submitted by Linda Weillnau

April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	2 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 5:00 PM – Soup Supper 6:00 PM – Lenten Service	3 9:00 AM - Prayer Group 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM –Strength Training Class	4 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day	5
6 ☛9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School *Food Drive: Fruits	7 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	8 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	9 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 6:00 PM – Ecumenical Service @ Bethel Lutheran Church Viroqua	10 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM –Strength Training Class	11 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day	12
13 Palm Sunday ☛9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship *Food Drive: Vegetables	14 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	15 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	16 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 5:45 PM – Church Board Meeting	17 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM –Strength Training Class 6:00 PM – Manudy Thursday Service	18 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day 1:00 PM – Good Friday Service @ Viroqua UMC	19
20 Easter Sunday ☛9:00 AM – Worship Service (Communion) 10:00 AM –Fellowship	21 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	22 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	23 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	24 9:00 AM – Bible Study Group 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM –Strength Training Class	25 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day	26
27 ☛9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	28 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	29 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	30 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site			

**** Remember to join us at 3:20 PM each day for being unified in prayer to pray for our church and how we can reach and serve others, while serving God ...**

“God, Give us the courage to dream big dreams. Please open our minds and hearts so we can have new breakthroughs to Your new possibilities. Amen.”

God is able to do much more than we ask or think, through His power working in us.
~ Ephesians 3:20 (NLV)